

RIFING

SECRET 10 NOVEMBER 1955

BRITAIN AND CYPRUS

I. Britain is evidently studying new proposals regarding Cyprus, including one involving "Dominion Status".

A. The Dominion status idea apparently is attractive to Archbishop Makarios, who claims he is prepared to drop demands for immediate union with Greece.

B. Britain still shows no inclination to go beyond its best previous offer of internal self-government and indefinite postponement of self-determination.

1. Maintenance of law and order remains first priority.
2. Current Middle East developments enhance the importance of the Cyprus staging base.

C. "Dominion status" is an anachronistic term, but it implies a relationship which neither Britain nor the Cypriots are likely to desire.

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1. Dominion status implies allegiance to the British crown, to which the Cypriots violently object.
2. It implies complete independence and co-equal membership of the Commonwealth, for which Cyprus is already, and which Britain could not grant in practice without abandoning its interests.

D. What the British may be seeking is some ad hoc arrangement which will satisfy Makarios and his followers while retaining the substance of British control in defense, finance, and foreign relations matters.

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